

**EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

Applicant's amendment and arguments filed 14 August 2009 overcome the outstanding rejection for the reasons advanced by Applicant (see, e.g., Remarks, page 9, line 6 - page 11, line 8). An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. The amendment shortens the abstract to be within the limit of 150 words or less. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The abstract has been amended as follows:

In line 11, immediately before "pedicle," --a male tapered head of a -- has been inserted.

In line 11, "innovative" has been deleted.

Lines 13-23, the following has been deleted: "The pedicle screws are configured with a recess formed therein having threads therein for threadedly engaging a set screw. The pedicle screw includes a male-tapered head for frictionally engaging the corresponding female-tapered through-hole formed in the C- clamp to form a morse taper locking fit. The C-clamp also provides a clamping action for connecting the C-clamp to the stems and the longitudinal rod. A second longitudinal rod can also be used to create the spinal implant construct and be coupled to the first longitudinal rod through a plurality of cross-link plates."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Comstock whose telephone number is (571) 272-

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4710 (a detailed message should be left if Examiner is unavailable). If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone or voicemail are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert, can be reached at (571) 272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/David Comstock/  
Examiner, Art Unit 3733

/Eduardo C. Robert/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3733